

MIAMI-DADE

# Transit agency's hiring process under investigation

\*TRANSIT, FROM 1B

Approximately a dozen transit managers and employees have been interviewed — several of them under subpoena — as well as a personal friend of Bradley's who works with Fullington's husband. Investigators are combing phone records and have also seized the office computer of Bradley's executive assistant, Amorhel Guishard.

Inspector General Chris Mazzella, whose staff is spearheading the investigation with help from the Miami-Dade State Attorney's office, declined to comment.

Bradley, in an interview, said he has done nothing wrong. The scrutiny, he said, comes with his high-profile, political job.

"People make allegations all the time," Bradley said. "The IG is investigating all the time. It happens. We hired more than 1,000 employees in the last three years, and we haven't had any problem."

Of Fullington, he said: "I don't even know the lady."

Defense attorney Francis Viamontes said Fullington had no idea that a warrant had been issued for her arrest until it was discovered by the Transit agency in November.

A key question for investigators: How can anyone facing criminal charges land a high-profile transit security job — especially after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks raised the stakes for transit agencies nationwide?

At the time of Fullington's temporary hire, the county

government made only cursory checks of Miami-Dade criminal records before bringing on temporary employees.

The policy changed in November — the same month that Fullington was arrested on the theft charges and fired. Today, all prospective temporary employees face the same fingerprinting and national background checks as full-time job candidates.



BRADLEY

Officials say the policy change had been in the works for months and was unrelated to the Fullington incident.

An examination of her full-time employment file shows that Fullington used at least five variations on her name on job applications and benefits forms: Beatrice Fullerton, Beatrice I. Fullington, Beatriz Ritchie Fullington, Beatriz Fullington Ritchie and Iona Beatrice Fullington.

Investigators are trying to unravel who orchestrated Fullington's hiring in January 2005 through a temporary-staffing agency and who authorized creating the permanent slot in the security division. It is unclear whether the post was ever advertised.

Transit administrators bypassed a selection committee that would normally gauge competing applicants — though it's unclear why. It is also unclear who set Fullington's salary at \$62,000 — five steps up from the entry-level wage of \$49,000.

There is no evidence in the personnel or recruitment files examined by The Miami Herald that Fullington was ever asked to provide references. The file shows recommendation letters from other employers but not from Memorial Regional Hospital, where she worked from 1992 to 2004.

According to court records, in the fall of 2004, Memorial Regional officials were reacting to a rash of patient complaints that their cash and jewelry had disappeared from the locked cashier's office. Fullington was captured on hidden cameras lifting an envelope filled with \$800 in cash that had

been planted by her supervisors.

According to an internal hospital report that was turned over to Hollywood police and is now the centerpiece of a pending criminal case against her, Fullington was confronted the next morning by her bosses.

She eventually returned the missing cash from her purse, telling her bosses that this was a one-time lapse, that she needed money to pay the rent.

Hospital officials declined to comment when asked whether the theft problem stopped after Fullington left their employ.

Fullington, who has not entered a plea, is free on \$1,000 bond. A pretrial hearing is set for May.

SOUTH FLORIDA, U.S.A.



NURI VALLBONA / MIAMI HERALD STAFF

**DISCOVERY AT DAWN:** Website creator Marc Fest asks Jordan Henderson and his friend the standard question of Fest's website: What are you looking forward to? In his real job, Fest is an executive with the New World Symphony.

## At sunrise, thoughts for the future

\*SPANGLER, FROM 1B

visible. Wednesday's sunrise was a little after 7:02: sublime, if that's your thing, but not too different from Tuesday's, or Monday's, or any day's.

"After doing this for a while," Fest said, "I realized that the most beautiful sunrise can be a little boring."

He decided to improve the sunrise with an interview

segment. He likes to ask people what they're looking forward to.

He likes the results. "The day is like a blank slate," he said. "You're like a blank slate, at this time. And there's just enough nervousness to give another layer," he said. "I'm always a little afraid of rejection."

Fest looked around for interview candidates. He rejected a grizzled man huddled behind a lifeguard stand with a large beer. He was



**CATCH THE RAYS**

If you can't wake up early enough, you can see Marc Fest's sunrise videos at [www.aftersunrise.com](http://www.aftersunrise.com)

rejected by a couple of guys scanning with metal detectors.

He watched a man and woman who appeared to be arguing down where the waves hit the sand. Her lips curled back and she jabbed a finger at his face; he grabbed her arm and forced it down. They talked but the wind took their words. After a while she laid her head on his chest and he kissed the top of

it, and when Fest approached, they rejected him together.

So Fest persists. Subsequent sunrises have brought a fisherman looking forward to catching some snook, and two tourists from California who said they were looking forward to love.

"Wonderful!" said Fest, from behind the camera.

If you have a story idea, e-mail [nspangler@miamiherald.com](mailto:nspangler@miamiherald.com).

MIAMI-DADE

## Women arrested for role in man's escape

\*FUGITIVE, FROM 1B

Florida Department of Law Enforcement have joined the search. A reward of up to \$11,000 is being offered for information leading to his capture.

According to police, Garay called Gonzalez after ditching the car. He asked her to pick him up because he'd run into trouble with police.

Gonzalez obliged and they went to the warehouses Slyper rents in West Kendall. She planned to rent a car for him and give him cash.

Clark rents the space to Slyper for her fish export business called Proyecto Pacú. People often help her feed the fish or load them into a truck.

So, he said it was not unusual when he got home about 5 p.m. and saw an unknown, heavysset man in the backyard.

Gonzalez, Slyper and Garay left that night. Clark saw the news reports on TV but did not realize it was Garay until Friday morning when police rolled up and began peppering him with questions.

After they were arrested, the two women told detectives they had dropped Garay off at a Shell gas station around Southwest 104th Street and 109th Avenue.

"They said they had no idea where he went after that," said Miami-Dade Detective Mary Walters, a police spokeswoman.

Investigators believe Garay is also the man wanted in a series of break-ins and sexual assaults in the Hammocks and Midwest districts.

In those cases, police have said the suspect entered unlocked doors and windows between 2 and 5 a.m., fondling women or masturbating while they slept.

At Gonzalez's house, her teenage sons described Garay as caring, a man who bought them Nike sneakers and took them bowling.

"I don't care what they say," said Thyago Pessoa, 16, fiddling with a box of cigarettes and a cellphone. "He's not a rapist."

Anyone with information can call Miami-Dade Crime-Stoppers at 305-471-TIPS.



GARAY

### TODAY'S AGENDA

Item contributed must be received at least two days in advance at Calendar Desk, The Miami Herald, 1 Herald Plaza, Fifth Floor Newsroom, Miami, FL 33132-1693. Or e-mail your items to [newscaledar@miamiherald.com](mailto:newscaledar@miamiherald.com). No faxes, please.

**EGGstravaganza:** Kids ages 2-10 can hunt for more than 15,000 eggs and enjoy rides, games and arts and crafts. Adults are also invited to hunt eggs and donate \$2 for each one found to the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life of Doral; 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., Miami West Park, 3000 NW 87th Ave., Doral. Free. Call 305-593-6610.

**Eggstreme Hunt & Carnival:** More than 100,000 eggs await kids of all ages at this event, which includes carnival rides, bounce houses and slides;

11 a.m. to 2 p.m., Merrick Park, 405 Biltmore Way, (at LeJeune Road, in front of City Hall), Coral Gables. Free admission; rides are 50 cents each. Call 305-446-6800.

**Egg Hunt at Calder:** 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. for kids 3-10; all kids must be accompanied by an adult; the first 1,000 to register receive a goodie bag. Free. Calder Race Course Picnic Grove, 21001 NW 27th Ave. (University Drive), Miami Gardens. 305-625-1311.

**The Great Miami Metrozoo Egg Safari:** Children 12 and under can participate in egg safaris, face painting, water tag, rock climbing, and listen to music provided by Radio Disney AM 990; 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., Metrozoo, 12400 SW 152nd St., Miami. Free with zoo admission of \$11.50 adults; \$10.50 seniors and \$6.75 children ages 3-12. Free for kids 2 and under and

Zoological Society of Florida members. Call 305-255-5551 or access [www.miamimetrozoo.com](http://www.miamimetrozoo.com).

**Hialeah Gardens Easter Egg Hunt:** The annual egg hunt features food, bounce house, magician, face painting, games, music and a visit from the Easter Bunny; noon to 4 p.m., Golden Eagle Park, 9784 NW 130th St., Hialeah Gardens. Free. Call 305-558-2331.

**Hialeah's Spring Egg-Stravaganza:** An Easter egg hunt with more than 32,000 eggs, carnival rides, food and an appearance by the Easter Bunny; 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Milander Park, 4700 Palm Ave., Hialeah. Free. Call 305-687-2650.

**The Little Farm Egg Hunt:** Four two-hour hunts — at 9 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 2 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. — plus petting farm, pony rides and goat-milking; participants can bring snacks;

hot dogs, chips, sodas and lemonade will be available for purchase. \$10 per child; \$6 per adult. Reservations required. Sponsored by The Little Farm 4H Club, 13401 SW 224th St., Homestead. Call 305-258-3186.

**Spring Eggstravaganza:** Kids 10 and under are invited to bring an Easter basket and hunt eggs, participate in an arts-and-crafts projects and enjoy carnival rides; 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., North Shore Park and Youth Center, 501 72nd St., Miami Beach; free. Call 305-861-3616.

**Barnacle under Moonlight Concert:** Sounds of classical guitar and flute music by Billington & Gonzales fill the air at the historic state park with its waterside home built by Commodore Ralph Middleton Munroe in 1891; 6 to 9 p.m., The Barnacle Historic State Park, 3485 Main Hwy., Coconut Grove; \$5. Call 305-442-6866.

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